



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITY CONTROL

DONALD W. DOWNES
CHAIRPERSON

THE ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

House Bill 6633: AAC RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONNECTICUT ACADEMY FOR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING REGARDING CONSOLIDATION OF ENERGY PROGRAMS AND A SECRETARY OF ENERGY

March 10, 2009

TESTIMONY OF CHAIRMAN DONALD W. DOWNES

The Department of Public Utility Control (Department) would like to comment on House Bill No. 6633. House Bill No. 6633 contains a series of provisions to implement the recommendations of the Connecticut Academy For Science And Engineering (CASE) regarding consolidation of energy programs. This legislation would create four new governmental bodies, 1) an Energy Office directed by the secretary of Energy within the Office of Policy & Management 2) a coordinating council which would replace the Connecticut Energy Advisory Board, 3) the Connecticut Energy Advisory Group a 15 member advisory group made up of both public and private entities 4) the Clean Energy Technology Center within Connecticut Innovations for administrative purposes.

While the Department appreciates the thorough review and analysis provided by CASE concerning the coordination and consolidation of energy programs in the state, the Department reminds the Committee that Connecticut 's conservation programs and energy efficiency programs are award-winning not only in New England but also in the nation second only to California. Clearly, Connecticut is on the right path when it comes to its conservation and energy efficiency programs thanks to the dedication and leadership of the utilities and state agencies in the development and implementation of such programs. Therefore, the Department believes the Committee should not dismantle or reorganize the current administrative bodies which function with a high level of expertise and institutional knowledge in this area. If improvements need to be made, it would be more efficient and cost-effective to work through the current entities. Creating a new level of beuaracracies when our state's economy is facing such difficulties will not benefit consumers as contemplated by this bill.

Moreover, the Department believes it is dangerous to centralize authority for the state's energy policy in one person which would change with each new administration.